

I am sure if the shoe were on the other foot and a Democrat were President and declared an emergency to reappropriate funds, my Republican colleagues would be up in arms. As I mentioned, when President Obama did far less, they were screaming bloody murder. But now they are remarkably silent.

So it is about time our Senate Republicans stand up for the rule of law, stand up for our Constitution, and stand up to the President when he is wrong. It is time to reassert the powers of the legislative branch, the people's branch of government. Senate Republicans will have that opportunity this week, likely tomorrow, and the American people will clearly be able to see whose side each Republican is on—the people's side, the Constitution's side, or the President's side.

NOMINATION OF DANIEL HABIB JORJANI

Madam President, finally, on the Jorjani nomination, later today, the Senate will vote on the confirmation of Daniel Jorjani to serve as Solicitor of the Department of the Interior. By all rights, Leader MCCONNELL should withdraw this vote from the floor. Mr. Jorjani's career is out of step with the agency's mission, and it has come to light that Mr. Jorjani likely lied to Congress about his role in the Department's adherence to transparency laws.

Under President Trump, the Interior Department has been mired in several investigations about the ethical conduct of its political appointees, including former Secretary Zinke. It is obvious that the Interior Department sorely needs transparency and public accountability, especially when the stewardship of our public lands is at stake. But at the Department of the Interior, political appointees have instituted policies to stonewall and squash transparency. It is likely that Mr. Jorjani played a key role in shaping these policies and is at this moment one of the subjects of an Interior Department inspector general investigation.

Despite his sworn testimony claiming no role in reviewing public records requests, public documentation has shown that Mr. Jorjani was regularly made aware of FOIA requests involving high-level political appointees. If confirmed, Mr. Jorjani would play an even larger role in overseeing the Interior Department's public releases.

The President said he would clean the swamp. Nomination after nomination that he makes, makes the swamp even filthier, stinkier. He seems to have no morality. He seems to have no honor. This is a man who is loaded with conflicts of interest, ethical concerns, and is likely an ideologue opposed to the very missions of the agency to which he is nominated. Mr. Jorjani is another bright red example of the lack of honor, of decency, of morality, and of honesty in Trump appointees. I urge Senate Republicans to join Democrats in voting to reject this sordid nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

ELECTION SECURITY

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, there are certain elements of this responsibility of serving in the Senate that have been tested from time to time in our history.

As Members of the Senate, each of us stands in the well right over in that corner, raises our right hand, and swears to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States. Those words are almost a cliché because they are used so often. Yet here today we are being called on to really reflect on that responsibility. We are called on to reflect on it because of things that have happened that have come to light in the last several days that raise serious constitutional questions.

I will say that in the 2½ to 3 years that Donald Trump has been President of the United States, I think our Nation has been rocked by this President's approach to the highest office in the land. He has said things and done things no other President has ever done.

Members of his own political party have been uncharacteristically silent when it comes to criticizing this President for his wrongdoing. The litany of things he has done is long and troubling. But there is one thing that we, as both political parties, need to maintain as the bedrock of this democracy, the bedrock of our commitment to this Constitution; that is, that in this Nation of the United States, the people govern.

Ultimately, the people of the United States have the last word—in our elections. In those elections, they make their choices, whether you like them or not. I wasn't particularly enamored with the Presidential choice in 2016, but I accepted it as the constitutional verdict of the American people. It really is the bedrock of who we are and what we are. That is why the notion that some other nation would interfere in our election is so repugnant.

The thought that the American people would not have the last word, that there would be other factors and other people, other countries engaged in our election, is as reprehensible under our Constitution as any concept I can think of.

We are sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic—another group of words we have heard over and over again. But reflecting on those for a moment—sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic—is a nation that tries to interfere in our political process an enemy of the United States? Of course. That is obvious on its face. Those who would encourage a nation to be engaged in our political process, to try to tip the scales one way or the other, are they enemies of the United States? Well, they are certainly not acting consistent with that constitutional principle.

This seems like a pretty straightforward constitutional interpretation. You don't need a Ph.D. or a law degree to understand, if a foreign country tries to interfere in the U.S. election process, that foreign country is an enemy in that action. Those who would encourage a foreign country or foreign agents to engage in our election, they, too, have crossed the line.

As I consider the revelations that President Trump is using his office to extort Ukraine to support his political reelection campaign, I wonder why there is so much silence on the other side of the aisle. This is an outrageous development.

Months before the 2016 election, our Nation's top intelligence officials told key congressional leaders about the efforts of Russia to interfere in the 2016 election, the election where the American people were choosing the President. Our top intelligence officials were understandably concerned. At that time, President Obama asked our congressional leaders for a bipartisan message condemning Vladimir Putin's efforts on behalf of Russia. President Obama wanted to make sure it was bipartisan before that 2016 election and showed a unified resistance to the interference by any foreign country in America's election process.

What was the response of the Republican majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, after hearing this bombshell, this threat from a former Communist KGB official, Vladimir Putin, against America's democratic process of election? He answered that he didn't want to get involved, and he didn't.

Then, for months after the election, not a single Republican Senator spoke on the Senate floor about the mounting and devastating evidence of Russia's attack on our election in 2016. I know that, personally, because the first casualty in that attack was the voter file of my State of Illinois. The Russians found a way, through their trolls, to get into the voter file of my home State, into the voting records of 70,000 or more Americans who live in Illinois. What did they do with that information? It appears little or nothing, but they could have changed it, and they could have had a dramatic impact on the right of these American citizens to make their legitimate constitutional choice in the election.

For months, the silence was deafening as well, as President Trump defended Vladimir Putin's brazen denials of these attacks. President Trump took the word of Vladimir Putin over that of his own American intelligence professionals. Senate Republicans blocked election security measure after election security measure, and despite finally relenting last week when Senator MCCONNELL said we could come up with \$250 million for election security grants, they still continue to block substantive legislation, despite ongoing attacks and U.S. vulnerability.

The country spent much of the Trump Presidency asking serious, necessary questions about Candidate

Trump's open solicitation of Russian help in his Presidential campaign and if such cooperation actually ran deeper. While unable to establish a formal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and the Russians, in nearly 200 pages, the Mueller report described "numerous links between the Russian government and the Trump Campaign."

The Mueller report also laid out, in detail, how the Russians brazenly and systematically interfered in our election in 2016 and tried to shape the outcome. You would think that after such a sobering set of findings, any American President would take the matter seriously and reassure the Nation that he really does put America, not a foreign power, first when it comes to our electoral process, but, no, shortly after the Mueller report was released, President Trump told ABC's George Stephanopoulos he would still accept a foreign government's offer to share damaging information about a political rival, echoing similar remarks he made in his original Presidential campaign.

In short, President Trump learned nothing from the experience of the 2016 election. The silence of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle seems to indicate the same.

Now we have reports that President Trump is at it again, trying to strong-arm the leader of Ukraine to join him in attacking one of President Trump's political rivals, Joe Biden. It is not to advance American interests, not to serve the American people, not to help an ally in Ukraine, not to uphold American values but to serve the President's own reelection campaign interest.

Last week, I offered an amendment in the Appropriations Committee to address \$250 million which had been appropriated by Congress to help protect Ukraine from Russian aggression and was never released. Last Thursday, I had this amendment coming before the committee, and it basically said to the administration: If you don't release the money we have appropriated, you are going to pay a price for it.

Occasionally, that is all you can do as a Member of Congress to get money spent that was appropriated and approved by the President. It was a curiosity. Why in the world were we holding back \$250 million that was supposed to help the Ukrainian people stop the aggression of Vladimir Putin?

I went to the committee hearing on Thursday morning. Before it started, one of my staff members said: Oh, the Trump administration released the money last night.

Last night? Why did they wait until 2 weeks before the end of the fiscal year to release the money?

Oh, they were reviewing this to determine whether there was any problem with releasing the money to Ukraine.

It was a curious answer. It didn't make much sense. The President had signed this appropriations bill.

For months, as President Trump, through his personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, tried to pressure Ukrainian President Zelensky to further his political agenda, the money that was supposed to go to Ukraine was withheld.

We learned in this morning's Washington Post the President had instructed his Chief of Staff to notify the appropriate agencies to withhold the money while he bargained with Zelensky over salacious, negative information about Joseph Biden and his family.

Now we are learning there was a whistleblower complaint, reportedly about the same issue. Apparently, someone in the administration who learned what President Trump was trying to do in strong-arming Ukrainian President Zelensky decided it overstepped the bounds and needed to be reported on officially. The congressional Intelligence Committees that get access to the information provided by this whistleblower are still waiting for that information—information the Trump-appointed inspector general for the intelligence community, Michael Atkinson, a Trump appointee, has determined to be credible and urgent. In other words, something happened at the highest levels of our government which led a professional in the intelligence agency, the inspector general, to make a whistleblower complaint for the record.

The law requires that complaint to be shared with committees of Congress. It wasn't. It turns out that the Attorney General of the United States, William Barr, may have played some role in diverting that from its ordinary statutory course. The President may not want anyone to see it, but the law is clear and must be respected: This information in the whistleblower complaint must be transmitted to Congress.

Is there anyone in the Senate, anyone who took the oath to protect the Nation against enemies foreign and domestic, who thinks any of us, regardless of political party, should solicit help from a foreign power to make sure we get elected or reelected?

This abdication of responsibility by the other party is remarkable. I want to salute one Senator, and I hesitate to mention any direct reference to him, but one Senator on the Republican side who has spoken out. He understands the gravity of the situation, the constitutional issues at stake in this debate, and the fact that, ultimately, history must stand in judgment of all of us of whether we have spoken up.

If this President of the United States can attempt to extort a foreign leader to withhold security funds that would have been given by the United States to his country in order to pursue and promote his own political agenda, we have reached a new low in the United States. If this whistleblower's claim goes into detail, it is only right and appropriate, under the statute, that this information be shared with the appro-

priate committees of the U.S. Senate and House. The whistleblower's claim needs to be released to the appropriate congressional committees and evaluated according to the law, and congressional Republicans—House and Senate—need to make it clear once and for all that no President—not this President, no President—can solicit or strong-arm a foreign country to further his own campaign. That is unacceptable under the Constitution of the United States, which I remind my colleagues we are sworn to uphold and defend.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from Hawaii.

NOMINATION OF DANIEL HABIB JORJANI

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, over the past 2½ years, we have seen a remarkable pattern emerge in the types of people Donald Trump nominates to serve in his administration. His nominees have extensive conflicts of interest. They work to advance the interest of foreign clients, financial patrons, or other special interests. In doing so, they are actively hostile to the very departments in which they have been nominated to serve.

Daniel Jorjani—the President's nominee to serve as Solicitor of the Department of the Interior—is a classic example of this pattern. The DOI Solicitor is a critically important position in the Department. In addition to being the chief legal adviser to the Secretary, the Solicitor is intimately involved in developing the legal justifications for Department policies, defending DOI positions in court, and overseeing compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, FOIA.

Given the influence the Department's Solicitor has on issues, such as the implementation of the Endangered Species Act, stewardship of public lands, and holding companies accountable for their impacts on the environment, it is essential that whoever occupies this job can execute his or her duties in a manner that upholds the public trust.

With the nomination of Daniel Jorjani, Donald Trump has once again shown that he prioritizes exploiting our environment for the benefit of fossil fuel companies over the very real interests of the American people and protecting our environment.

Prior to joining the Trump administration, Mr. Jorjani spent 7 years working in organizations throughout the Koch brothers' sprawling empire. In positions such as the general counsel of Freedom Partners, Mr. Jorjani assisted the Koch brothers in pursuing a relentlessly pro-fossil fuel agenda. He fought against the Obama administration's actions to combat climate change and protect the environment.

It was with precisely this experience in mind that Donald Trump appointed Mr. Jorjani as the Principal Deputy Solicitor and Acting Solicitor of DOI in 2017. During his tenure in these roles,